

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/10/2021 9:06:17 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ikaika Sarkissian	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha! I am in support of appropriating the ONLY needed funds to eradicate this disgusting invasive pest that threatens cattle! Eww!

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/10/2021 11:53:17 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jeri Moniz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill. We need to get this under control before it makes more of an impact to the agricultural community. We need to protect our ability to produce food for the state.

Personal Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 237  
RELATING to INVASIVE SPECIES

by  
Jenee S. Odani, DVM, DACVP

House Committee on Agriculture  
Friday, February 12, 2021  
10:00 am; via Video Conference

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the committee:

My name is Jenee Odani, and I am the Extension Veterinarian with the University of Hawaii at Manoa's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. I am grateful for the opportunity to provide personal testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 237**. This testimony does not represent the position of the University of Hawaii nor CTAHR.

I know that this year brings with it many challenges for the State, including fiscal restrictions. However, I believe that the ongoing and growing threat posed by the Two-lined Spittlebug to Hawaii's lands and the ranchers that steward these lands warrants special consideration. Please appropriate funds to the Dept. of Agriculture for the control of the Two-lined spittlebug and recovery of the rangelands damaged by the invasive pet.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/10/2021 1:04:43 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Taylor Kellerman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

TSLB is an issue that has the potential to devastate the local beef industry, and without the appropriate funding the cattle industry will not be able to properly position itself for adequate control implementation.

Mahalo for your consideration

Taylor Kellerman

Director of Diversified Agriculture and Land Stewardship

Kualoa Ranch Hawaii



**Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.**

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair

Rep. Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair

HB237

RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.

Friday, February 12, 2020, 10:00 a.m.

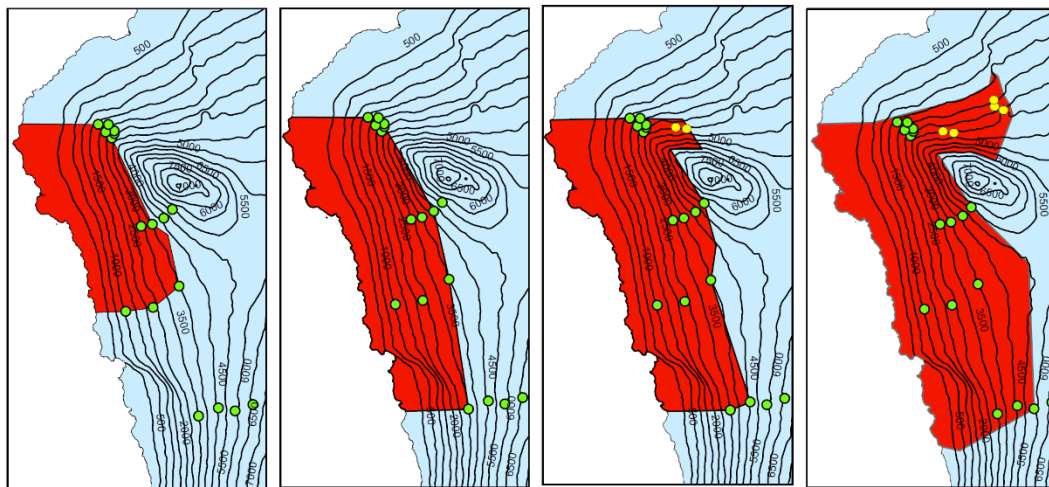
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee, The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **strongly supports HB237** to appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture for the control of the Two-lined Spittlebug (TLSB) and recovery of rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.

While there are many pressing issues that have arisen from the effects of COVID-19, agriculture should continue to be a priority topic. We are aware that there are many pressing issues that need funding, but this invasive species directly affects food production. Hawaii Island is responsible for 80% of the state's cattle production, so an outbreak of this invasive species will be devastating not only to cattle ranchers, but to our endeavor for food security. This invasive species issue affects all of Hawaii, not just the cattle ranchers.

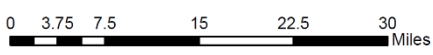
Two-lined Spittlebug was first detected in Kailua-Kona, on the Big Island of Hawaii in September 2016 where it had caused damage to nearly 2,000 acres of pasture land. Monthly pasture surveys that began in November 2017 have revealed that the pest has rapidly expanded its range and as of 2020 infests 176,124 acres. It is imperative that we stop the spread of the Two-lined Spittlebug and assist ranchers affected in recovery efforts.

### Acreage of Infected Area



**Legend**

- TLSB Infected Area
- Ranch Survey Transects
- TLSB Found at Pu'u Wa'awa'a
- Elevation (ft)



The Two Line Spittlebug project is supported by grants through the Hawaii Dept. of Agriculture, Contract No. 65973; Hawaii Dept. of Land and Natural Resources, Hawaii Invasive Species Council Contract No. C81112; and Hawaii County Office of Research and Development via the Big Island Resource Conservation and Development Council Contract No. C006362. [tle.org](http://tle.org)

P.O. B



## Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

Two-lined Spittlebug infestations in Hawaii have been shown to dramatically reduce the forage quantity and quality of pastures by killing key forage species outright, or by decreasing the nutritional value, palatability, and productivity of key forages. This promotes the establishment and proliferation of invasive weeds with no economic or other value, while significantly reducing the quality of foraging grasses. Reseeding areas denuded by the Two-lined Spittlebug will protect from runoff and provide forage for cattle. Recovery efforts for ranches affected by Two-lined Spittlebug include brush management, herbaceous weed treatment, range planting, forage and biomass planting, and fencing and prescribed grazing. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council has been holding consistent meetings to keep up to date on this issue and work towards finding solutions. This group includes CTAHR researchers, HDOA, HISC, BIISC, affected ranchers, and ranchers who are at threat.

Healthy grazing lands are integral to watershed health and function in Hawaii. The Two-lined Spittlebug severely disturbs the Hawaiian grazing land plant community by killing the grass. This loss of living ground cover leaves the land vulnerable to soil loss which contributes to sediment-laden runoff into our near shore coastal waters, affecting coral reef health. Healthy coral reefs provide important services such as shoreline protection, marine ecosystem habitats that support important food chains that also help support our communities. Invasive weeds move in on these degraded lands, changing the entire character of the landscape hindering not only agriculture, but also other land management efforts, and recreational uses such as forest and wildlife conservation projects, hiking and hunting, not to mention the change to the aesthetic value of the land.

Ranchers in Hawaii are working hard to try to find cost-effective ways to adapt to this new challenge and to keep their lands healthy and productive, but the task is too big for them to take on alone. HDOA has provided funds for research efforts and we respectfully urge the legislature to provide them with funding to continue supporting this effort. As

We **strongly support HB237** for funds to be appropriated to aid in recovery from the damage from the Two-lined Spittlebug and preventing the spread of the invasive species.

Nicole Galase  
Managing Director



**LARRY JEFTS FARMS, LLC  
PO BOX 27  
KUNIA, HAWAII 96759  
(808) 688-2892**

HB237, Relating to Invasive Species  
House AGR Hearing  
Friday, February 12, 2021  
Testimony by: Larry Jeffs  
Position: Support

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the House AGR Committee:

I am Larry Jeffs, owner and operator of Larry Jeffs Farms, LLC. We have more than 42 years of Hawaii farm experience on Molokai and Oahu. I am a volunteer director, serving as Chair of the West Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). I have been an officer of the Hawaii Farm Bureau for many years.

Livestock ranching has an estimated annual value of \$68 million with 142,000 beef cattle on more than 1,300 ranches---60% are raised on the Big Island. It's an industry that is striving to bring local food to Hawaii consumers.

Two-lined spittlebug damage results in entire pastures reduced to dust and replaced with weeds that cattle cannot eat. This damage causes runoff and affects the surrounding land and water. More importantly, it has a direct impact on food production and replacement of imported beef.

As such, please consider the appropriations request to mitigate and control the spittlebug and restoration of pasture lands among the budget priorities during these challenging times.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/10/2021 1:59:50 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Keith Unger	McCandless Ranch	Support	No

Comments:

McCandless Ranch strongly supports HB237. While we understand COVID19 has wreaked havoc on state finances, a healthy agricultural and cattle industry should continue to be a top priority. Hawaii Island is responsible for approximately 80% of the state's cattle production, so an uncontained outbreak such as the TLSB will have a devastating effect on Hawaii's food security.

Therefore, we strongly support HB237 for funds to be appropriated to aid in the recovery from damage from the TLSB and to prevent the continued spread of this invasive species.





P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759  
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921  
e-mail [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org); [www.hfbf.org](http://www.hfbf.org)

February 12, 2021

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

**TESTIMONY ON HB 237**  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Conference Room 325  
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice-Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports HB 237**, which appropriates funds to the department of agriculture for the control of the two-lined spittlebug and recovery of the rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.

The Two-lined spittlebug was first detected in Kailua-Kona, on the Big Island of Hawaii in September 2016 where it had caused damage to nearly 2,000 acres of pasture land. Monthly pasture surveys that began in November 2017 have revealed that the pest has rapidly expanded its range and as of October of 2019 infests over 222 sq. miles or about 142,468 acres. We must stop the spread of the Two-lined Spittlebug and assist ranchers affected in recovery efforts.

Two-lined Spittlebug infestations in Hawaii have been shown to dramatically reduce the forage quantity and quality of pastures by killing key forage species outright, or by decreasing the nutritional value, palatability, and productivity of key forages. This promotes the establishment and proliferation of invasive weeds with no economic or other value, while significantly reducing the quality of foraging grasses. Reseeding areas denuded by the Two-lined Spittlebug will protect from runoff and provide forage for cattle.

Recovery efforts for ranches affected by Two-lined Spittlebug include brush management, herbaceous weed treatment, range planting, forage, and biomass planting, and fencing and prescribed grazing.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important subject.



TESTIMONY OF JACOB D. TAVARES, LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS BUSINESS MANAGER,  
PARKER RANCH, INC.  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
February 12, 2021 10:00 am  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

MEASURE: H.B. No. 237

TITLE: RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee:

Parker Ranch, Inc. **strongly supports House Bill 237** to appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture for the control of the Two-lines Spittlebug (TLSB) and recovery of rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.

TLSB is one of the greatest threats to Hawaii's local beef production. The TLSB is already affecting more than 175,000 acres of land on the Big Island, and is spreading rapidly. Fellow rancher's whose grazing lands have been impacted by this invasive species, are dramatically reducing their herd sizes, and thus revenue streams. The livestock business is very low margin to begin with, and in light of Covid-19, we risk losing more of our family ranchers if a solution to this pest is not discovered soon.

We at Parker Ranch are fortunate that the TLSB has not yet reached our grazing lands, however the potential impacts that it would have on our grazing operations are, quite frankly, terrifying. The University of Hawaii CTAHR, Hawaii Department of Agriculture, HISC, BIISC, affected ranchers, those of us who are at threat, and other stakeholders within the Hawaii conservation and livestock industries have been hard at work to develop a solution to this growing infestation. That being said, more resources are needed if our industry is to combat this challenge in a timely manner.

Beyond affecting the livestock industry, this pest will continue to impact other food security concerns, watershed lands, and the further spread of invasive weeds. Healthy grazing lands are integral to watershed health and function in Hawaii. The Two-lined Spittlebug severely disturbs the Hawaiian grazing land plant community by killing the grass. This loss of living ground cover leaves the land vulnerable to soil loss which contributes to sediment-laden runoff into our near shore coastal waters, affecting Hawaii's delicate ecosystems. Invasive weeds move in on these degraded lands, changing the entire character of the landscape hindering not only agriculture, but also other land management efforts.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

JOSH GREEN  
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE**

**FEBRUARY 12, 2021  
10:00 AM  
VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 237  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Chairperson Hashem and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 237, relating to invasive species. The bill appropriates funds from the invasive species fund the sum of \$659,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2021-2022 to be expended by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture to mitigate and the two-lined spittlebug, including but not limited to reducing the two-lined spittlebug population using insecticides, integrating weed management measures in affected rangelands, and reseeding pastures damaged by infestations.. The Department supports this measure and offers a comment.

Invasive species are a primary threat to Hawai'i's agriculture and economy. Funding for control of invasive species is critical to ensure that appropriate responses can be implemented and maintained which mitigate negative impacts on agriculture, the environment and the economy. The Hawai'i Interagency Biosecurity Plan guides these efforts. Although the primary target of the spittlebug is kikuyu grass, the grass is widely used for pastures and the Department feels that protecting these pastures is in the best interest of the State, as it is in line with the Department's mission of increasing local food production and protecting agricultural capacity.

The Department suggests the clarifying amendment at Page 3 Line 3 - 4 (new language underlined):



“SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the [~~invasive species fund of the State of Hawaii~~] pest inspection, quarantine, and eradication fund the sum of \$659,000 or so...”.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
Friday, February 12, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports HB 237, Relating to Invasive Species.**

Dear Chair Hashem and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food; renewable energy and clean transportation; and better management of freshwater and waste.

**Ulupono supports HB 237**, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the control of the two-lined spittlebug and recovery of the rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.

Ulupono supports the State's goal to increase local food production, which includes strengthening the local livestock industry. The two-lined spittlebug was first detected in Kailua-Kona on Hawai'i Island in September 2016 where it damaged roughly 2,000 acres of pastureland. As of October 2019, damage from infestation has skyrocketed to about 142,468 acres of rangelands on Hawai'i Island. In highly infested areas, there is 100% die-off of key pasture grasses such as Kikuyu and Pangola. Rapid spread and die-off due to this pest are affecting the local livestock industry and pose a massive threat to production on Hawai'i Island. Increasing State resources to support the local livestock industry will be crucial in maintaining the growth of local livestock production and meeting State food production goals.

We recognize that you face many difficult decisions this year to balance the budget in the midst of this economic crisis, but we hope that this support for local agriculture can be considered.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/10/2021 6:35:31 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

Please support HB237.

Thank you,

Andrea Quinn

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/10/2021 9:54:52 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Aileen K . F. Yeh	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Current efforts to study and mitigate the Two-lined Spittlebug are extremely important. This bill continues funding the efforts. While other invasive species are also a threat, the Two-lined Spittlebug directly impacts food production. This affects everyone, not just ranchers. Loss of the grasses in pastures and forest lands allow other non-native broad leaved weeds and invasive species to dominate. Noxious weeds such as fireweed (senecio madagascarensis), hamakua pamakani, clidemia, and many other weeds that livestock do not eat are quick to come in. More work needs to be done, and we need to support the work being done to select resistant forages and treatments to control the two lined spittle bug.**





**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE, 2021**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

H.B. NO. 237, RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.

**BEFORE THE:**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

**DATE:** Friday, February 12, 2021 **TIME:** 10:00 a.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Via Videoconference, Room 325

**TESTIFIER(S):** **WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY.**  
(For more information, contact Andrew Goff,  
Deputy Attorney General, at 586-1160)

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Chair Hashem and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General makes the following comments.

The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture for the mitigation and control of the two-lined spittlebug, and to aid in the recovery of the rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.

The bill appropriates money out of the “invasive species fund of the State of Hawaii.” Page 3, lines 3-4. There is no fund called the “invasive species fund,” but there is the “pest inspection, quarantine, and eradication fund” established by section 150A-4.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, with the Department of Agriculture designated as the expending agency. Consequently, we recommend deleting the words “invasive species fund of the State of Hawaii” on page 3, lines 3-4, and replacing them with “pest inspection, quarantine, and eradication fund.”

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



February 10, 2021

Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair  
Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Agriculture

**Testimony in Support of HB 237, Relating to Invasive Species (Appropriates funds to be expended by the Department of Agriculture [DOA] for the control of the two-lined spittlebug and recovery of the rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.)**

**Friday, February 12, 2021, 10:00 a.m., in Conference Room 325, via Videoconference**

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers, and utility companies. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational, and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of HB 237** and of the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture in Hawaii.

**HB 237.** This bill proposes to appropriate funds out of the invasive species fund of the State of Hawaii to be expended by the DOA to mitigate and control two-lined spittlebug infestations in the State. The moneys shall be used to fund recovery efforts including reducing the two-lined spittlebug population using insecticides, integrating weed management measures in affected rangelands, and reseeded pastures damaged by infestations.

**LURF's Position.** Invasive species such as insects, disease-bearing organisms, snakes, weeds, and other pests pose the greatest threat to Hawaii's economy, agriculture, tourism, the natural environment, native species and to the health and lifestyle of Hawaii's people. Invasive species already cause millions of dollars in crop losses, the extinction of native species, the destruction of native wet, moist and dry land forests, and the spread of disease, but many more harmful pests, such as the two-lined spittlebug now threaten to infest and damage pasture lands, reducing the quality of

forage pastures, and thereby impairing livestock ranching, which is a highly productive, expanding, and extremely valuable industry on all islands with an estimated current annual value of more than \$68 million.

LURF members include property owners, farmers and ranchers who own, maintain, and engage in agricultural enterprises, and who consider efforts to protect and support agriculture significant to the continued conduct of their operations and to help sustain and preserve farming and ranching businesses into the future. The two-lined spittlebugs threaten job and food security in the agricultural and ranching industries, as well as throughout the State, making it vital to address infestations and restrict further uncontrolled spread.

As potentially devastating threats to and food safety and security continue to be a significant concern, LURF and its members appreciate this measure being taken to assist agricultural stakeholders.

For the above reasons, LURF **supports HB 237** and respectfully urges your favorable consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this matter.

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/10/2021 10:23:08 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
William G. Jacintho	Maui Cattlemen's Association	Support	No

Comments:

This is an issue that will affect everyone. Not only ranchers, but other open space, forest areas, as well as precious watersheds.

MCA thanks you for your support.

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 5:49:58 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alex Franco	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support HB237

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 7:02:38 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Woody Child	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support HB237



Bobby Farias  
President  
Hawaii Meats, LLC  
91-319 Olai Street  
Kapolei, HI 96707

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair  
Representative Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair

**Re: HB 237 - SUPPORT**

Friday, February 12, 2021, 10:00am  
Conference Room 325  
VIA Video Conference

Aloha e Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bobby Farias, part owner of Hawaii Meats LLC, I am a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation rancher from Kauai. I **support** HB237, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the control of the two-lined spittlebug and recovery of the rangelands damaged by the invasive pest. With 25% of the state's land area covered by livestock ranches, we support this effort to keep ranching alive and pastures healthy. We respectfully ask that the committee approve the appropriated amount to control the two-lined spittlebug infestation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter,

Bobby Farias  
President of  
Hawaii Meats, LLC

**HB-237**

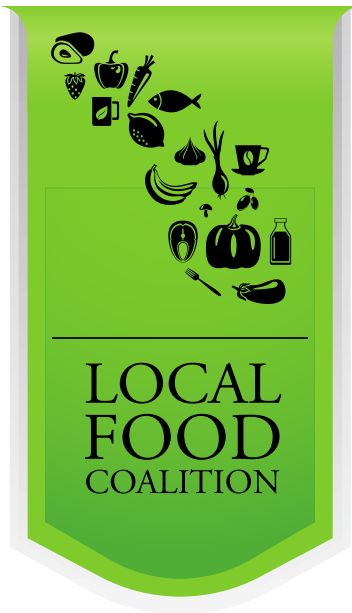
Submitted on: 2/11/2021 9:15:21 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Whitney Boteilho	Individual	Support	No

Comments:





Hawai'i Aquaculture & Aquaponics Association  
Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council  
Hawai'i Farm Bureau Federation  
Hawai'i Farmers' Union United  
Hawai'i Food Industry Association  
Hawai'i Food Manufacturers Association  
Kohala Center  
Land Use Research Foundation of Hawai'i  
Maui Farm to School Network (Maui F2SN)  
Ulupono Initiative  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources - University of Hawai'i at Manoa

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
February 12, 2021 - 10:00 A.M. - Videoconference

**RE: HB 237 - Relating to Invasive Species - In Support**

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso and Members of the Committee:

The Local Food Coalition **supports** HB 237, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the control of the two-lined spittlebug and recovery of the rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.

Two-lined spittlebug was first detected in Kailua-Kona, on the Big Island of Hawaii in September of 2016 where it had caused damage to nearly 2,000 acres of pasture land. In September 2020, CTAHR published "Twoline Spittlebug: A Pasture Pest In Paradise" which revealed that the two-line spittle bug is expanding its range on Hawaii Island at about 35,000 acres/year. At this rate it will cover all the important ranchlands on the Big Island within the next ten years.

The potential impact on the cattle industry could be devastating as the two-lined spittlebug was discovered at similar elevations to those of the areas around Waimea, where the majority of the cattle in Hawaii are raised. The two-lined spittlebug kills the grasses completely, providing conditions conducive for the growth of invasive species, weeds and lower forage quality grasses. Financial support is critically needed now to provide the necessary tools for controlling this pest. If research does not continue to find ways to stop the spread of the two-lined spittlebug, there could be a negative impact of local food production.

The Local Food Coalition is an organization comprising of farmers, ranchers, livestock producers, investors and other organizations working to provide Hawaii's food supply.

We respectfully request your support of HB 237. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

John Garibaldi  
808-544-8319  
[jgaribaldi@wik.com](mailto:jgaribaldi@wik.com)

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 9:34:39 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Tawn Keeney	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Public Comment before the House Committee on Agriculture pertaining to

HB237 Relating to Invasive Species

I am a physician, retired after General Practice in Honokaa for 36 years. For the past year or two I have been interested in the Spittlebug infestation in the Kona pastures. My interest here arises from climate change concerns, and recognizing that those pastures which have become degraded by this infestation have therein become the one of the State of Hawaii's best opportunities for meaningful reforestation for the purpose of carbon sequestration and plant based (food forest) agriculture, to address the climate emergency.

I propose the following two Amendments to Bill HB237 as it is presented to the House Committee on Agriculture.

1) A study of proposed reforestation of degraded pasturelands will be undertaken. Such reforestation would be for purposes of carbon sequestration, plant based agriculture and food forest, and environmental and cultural restoration. This study would be coordinated between Department of Agriculture, the Division of Wildlife and Forestry of DLNR and University of Hawaii Extension Service. This would include consideration of strategies to incentivize the custodians of the degraded pasturelands toward reforestation. This might include lease or purchase strategies.

2) Any pesticide use for eradication of spittlebug which is beyond the licensing limitations for use in the State of Hawaii (when a bill for public funding of spittlebug eradication was first introduced to Legislature) in January of 2020 shall be reported monthly to the public in the form of either mailings to the public of Hawaii Island, or prominent announcement in the news services which will include Hawaii Tribune

Herald, West Hawaii Today and Honolulu Star Advertiser. This will include identification of chemicals used and locations (maps) of application and amounts of application.

I ask that these amendments be considered by the House Committee on Agriculture.

1. These amendments reflect a desire that the Spittlebug infestation would be eliminated or substantially controlled. In that desire, these amendments are in support of the ranching community in this challenge.

2. My two conversations with the Big Island's recognized authority on the Spittlebug infestation, Mark Thorne, UH Agricultural Extension agent for pastureland, have left me with the impression that there is no possibility for eradication and meaningful control will be very difficult to achieve. I refer you to the following articles:

<https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/hisc/files/2019/07/TLSB-HISC-Project-Report-072919.pdf>

<https://www.hawaiitribune-herald.com/2019/12/10/hawaii-news/farmers-have-few-options-for-fighting-two-lined-spittle-bug/>

<https://globalrangelands.org/sites/globalrangelands.org/files/dlio/70620/Two-Lined%20Spittlebug%20-%20November%202018%20Updat.pdf>

3. If a meaningful control strategy is possible then it should be investigated and pursued as thoroughly as possible. Mitigation by means of substitution of 140,000 (as of January 2020) acres of degraded grasslands with more resistant varieties of pasture grass would be a daunting task. Likewise the eradication of the invaded weeds and shrubs.

4. Because of the enormity of these challenges we must expand our scope of consideration to other desirable outcomes, and thus we remember that we are in the

midst of another immense challenge - the climate crisis. The Hawaii County Council and Maui Council have declared climate emergency.

5. Hawaii's preeminent climate scientist, Charles Fletcher PhD, UH SOEST and vice chairman of the Honolulu Climate Commission, a recognized authority on the impacts of climate change in the Pacific basin, recently presented this address to the Hawaii County Council:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjLzUPr31k14\\_8SQKhU\\_Z9w](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjLzUPr31k14_8SQKhU_Z9w) (1hr 15min). In this lecture he states:

1. Producing beef generates 100x more Greenhouse Gas than plant-based food
2. Over 80% of farmland is used for livestock but it produces just 18% of food calories and 37% of the protein
3. Cattle + grain they eat use one-third of available land surface on this planet.
  - . 16% of all available freshwater
  - . 1/3 of worldwide grain production
4. We are deforesting the planet at a rate of 30 football fields per minute, largely to raise cattle and the grain to feed them
  
6. It is widely recognized that foremost among the mitigation strategies that can be applied to effectively reduce or retard the threat of Climate Change is sequestration of atmospheric Carbon Dioxide through afforestation and reforestation of all available lands. The recent federal administration has committed to participate in global planting of 'a Trillion Trees'.
  
7. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has recommended the shifting of diet emphasis away from meat consumption toward a plant based diet for purposes not only of individual health but also as a major climate change mitigation strategy.
  
8. All of the pastureland on Hawaii Island was previously forested prior to the introduction of cattle. Reforestation, therefore, would be a practical response in the efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change.

9. Because of the possibility, if not likelihood, that no effective strategy of control and mitigation of this infestation will develop, planning for conversion of these degraded pasturelands into forested lands should be investigated. This investigation would inform the ranchers of opportunities for livelihood as custodians of these newly forested lands, possibly as agricultural enterprises to enhance the food security and local food sourcing for these islands.

10. Thus, the expenditure of funds for the benefit of the 'aina', beginning with identification of the best use of these degraded pastures, must include the study of possibilities of reforestation of these lands for climate mitigation through carbon sequestration and for plant based agriculture, orchards and 'food forest'. But also the environmental and cultural benefit from reforestation would be great.

11. The public on the island of Hawaii is sensitive to the use of pesticides. A ban on pesticide use on public property such as roadsides and parks was recently passed by the County Council only to fail with the Mayor's veto. The public will rightfully insist that any use of pesticides which is beyond the currently allowed practice must be brought to the public's attention. I believe that if the facts and projections surrounding the TLSB infestation are understood, the public would condone some flexibility in pesticide use in control efforts, so long as the public is updated regularly.

If agreement with the above principles is found then please proceed with attaching the amendments to SB237 as follows:

1) A study of proposed reforestation of degraded pasturelands will be undertaken. Such reforestation would be for purposes of Carbon Sequestration, Plant based agriculture and food forest, and environmental and cultural restoration. This study would be coordinated between Department of Agriculture, the Division of Wildlife and Forestry of DLNR and University of Hawaii Extension Service. This would include consideration of strategies to incentivize the custodians of the degraded pasturelands toward reforestation. This might include lease or purchase strategies.

2) Any pesticide use for eradication of spittlebug which is beyond the licensing limitations for use in the State of Hawaii (when a bill for public funding of spittlebug eradication was first introduced to Legislature) in January of 2020 shall be reported monthly to the public in the form of either mailing to the public of Hawaii Island, or

prominent announcement in the news services which will include Hawaii Tribune Herald, West Hawaii Today and Honolulu Star Advertiser. This will include identification of chemicals used and locations (maps) of application and amounts of application.

Respectfully, Tawn Keeney MD

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 10:27:04 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jimmy Gomes	Ulupalakua Ranch	Support	No

Comments:

We support HB 237

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 10:38:32 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
J Ashman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This is a much-needed bill. Please pass it before our productive pasture lands are decimated.

Thank you.





# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Agriculture  
Friday, February 12, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

By  
Nicholas Comerford, Dean  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### HB 237 – RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 237.

The two-lined spittlebug is just the next challenge to the biosecurity of Hawai'i agriculture. This is a continuing story accurately depicting biosecurity as one of the most, if not the most, important management issues in agriculture and natural resources.

The bill does a credible job of describing the problem and its economic effect. The spittlebug will continue to degrade Hawai'i Island pasture and affect livestock operations if a coherent integrated pest management program is not identified and extended to producers. This problem will require the combined efforts of the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA), the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UHM/CTAHR), and the appropriate federal agencies on Hawai'i Island.

UHM/CTAHR is currently involved with spittlebug research and Extension efforts through an Extension Specialist on Hawai'i Island and a Professor of Entomology on the Mānoa campus. There is also a clear role for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Interregional Research Project No. 4 (IR-4) program, which could also be a source of federal funds. The IR-4 mission is to test the efficacy of pesticides and develop data to label the chemistry for specific uses.

HB 237 budgets funds to combat this pest, and puts those funds and decision making authority in the hands of the HDOA. We strongly support this effort as UHM/CTAHR already works closely with HDOA on this and on other biosecurity issues.

We support HB 237, but recognize that the State is in a challenging economic time where funds are low and responsibilities are high. We defer to the HDOA as to their priorities and availability of personnel to support this measure.

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 4:23:37 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
carolyn wong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB237. The Two-lined Spittle Bug is shaping up to be one of the most serious new invasive species in Hawaii due to its extreme impact to our environment, the foundation for our food production, watersheds, and general character of our landscapes. This pest has the potential to completely destabilize the lands that supports about 70% of our livestock industry. Funding is desperately needed to continue funding research to control the effects and spread of this pest and devise strategies to restore the ecological integrity and agricultural capacity of the affected lands. Please support this bill and please support full funding of our new bio security plan.

Mahalo,,

Carolyn Wong

Bill Number HB237

Invasive Species

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso and Members of the Committee

F Ranch LLC formally Hualalai Ranch in the Kaupulehu Kona area supports HB237. We were among the first ranches to experience the devastation from the Two-lined Spittlebug. Instead of repeating the information from the testimony of others I would like to share the attempts and losses made over the last four years.

Fact: breeding herd normal inventory 600 units, today 416 units. Most of the damages are permanent with regrowth of invasive weeds.

Fact: we are applying herbicide on a weekly schedule in attempt to allow new ground coverage to grow which is mostly clovers and low quality forage. A log is kept of spray applications, equipment and laborer hours. The total finished solution used from February 2018 through February 2021 totals 13,442 gallons.

Please understand we are not in favor of contributing to surface and ground water pollution. We use mass grazing followed with spot herbicide applications.

Test planting of new grasses with the help of the Extension Service has had good results but more assistance is needed. We ask all of you to please consider HB237. We need your kokua to battle this invasive threat to livestock production an important food source.

Thank you for your time,  
F Ranch LLC  
Frank & Paula Boteilho

**HB-237**

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 8:16:26 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2021 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kristin	Ulupalakua Ranch, Inc	Support	No

Comments:

We support HB237. The Two Lined Spittlebug is currently devastating pastures on the Big Island and we are very worried about it affecting our pastures on Maui in the near future. We need to keep this issue in our focus in order to continue support for ranchers already hit and prevent future spread.

Thank you!